

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

SUMMARY: ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WAS RECITAL OF EVENTS OF PAST YEAR, WITH CANAL ISSUE FOCUS IN PRESENTATION OF EACH. REGARDING TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, HE STRESSED THAT PANAMA HAD PROPOSED THAT DURATION OF TREATY "IN ALL OF ITS ASPECTS, INCLUDING DEFENSE" NOT EXTEND BEYOND END OF PRESENT CENTURY; LATTER POINT WAS ONE OF TWO WHICH DREW APPLAUSE FROM MEMBERS. MOST IMPORTANT FUTURE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED RESTRUCTURING MINISTRY THROUGH REVISION OF ITS BASIC LAW AND JUNE 1976 AMPHICTYONIC CONFERENCE. ASSEMBLY PUT NO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO MINISTER, AND PASSED RESOLUTIONS SUPPORTING GOP IN TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, CALLING ON PLANNING MINISTRY TO INCREASE FONMIN BUDGET, AND REQUESTING SPECIAL SESSION OF ASSEMBLY AT TIME OF AMPHICTYONIC CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER OZORES DELIVERED 50-MINUTE ANNUAL REPORT TO MORNING SESSION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES (NACR) ON OCTOBER 22, AS PART OF SERIES OF SUCH REPORTS BY ALL UNCLASSIFIED

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MINISTERS AND HEADS OF AGENCIES. REPORT TOOK FORM OF

RECITAL OF MAJOR CONFERENCES, MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES DURING PAST YEAR, WITH LEITMOTIV OF IMPACT OF THESE EVENTS ON, OR THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO, CANAL ISSUE. HE BEGAN WITH DISCUSSION OF LOS: AN ESSENTIALLY MARITIME NATION, PANAMA EXPECTED TO PLAY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE AND TO DEMONSTRATE "SPIRIT OF CONCILIATION" AT FORTHCOMING SESSIONS IN NEW YORK. DURING THIS RECITAL, HE FORMALLY ADVISED NACR OF PANAMA'S ELECTION TO UN SECURITY COUNCIL, WHICH DREW SCATTERED APPLAUSE FROM MEMBERS.

2. OZORES WENT ON TO REFER TO ONGOING INFORMATION CAMPAIGN, PARTICULARLY BY MEMBERS OF TREATY NEGOTIATIONS SUPPORT TEAM, WHICH HAD INCLUDED OVER 80 PUBLIC MEETINGS WITH ALL TYPES OF GROUPS IN PANAMA, ELSEWHERE IN WORLD, AND IN US; THIS ACTIVITY WOULD CONTINUE DURING NEXT YEAR. AN IMPORTANT ACTIVITY OF COMING YEAR WOULD BE RESTRUCTURING OF FOREIGN MINISTRY TO ACCORD WITH PRESENT REALITIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, WHICH WOULD INVOLVE REVISION OF MINISTRY'S ORGANIC LAW IN COOPERATION WITH ASSEMBLY AND NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION. (FYI: WE HAVE HEARD ELSEWHERE THAT REORGANIZATION OF MINISTRY IS IN WORKS, BUT OZORES GAVE NO FURTHER DETAILS ON FORM IT WOULD TAKE. END FYI) FINALLY, HE DESCRIBED AT LENGTH GOP ORGANIZATION TO PREPARE FOR JUNE 1976 AMPHICTYONIC CONFERENCE WHICH HIS PRESENTATION INDICATED WOULD BE HIGHLIGHT OF COMING YEAR.

3. REGARDING CURRENT STATUS OF TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, OZORES GAVE FAIRLY GENERAL PRESENTATION BASED ON, AND REFERRING TO, SEPTEMBER PUBLISHED REPORT OF PANAMANIAN NEGOTIATORS. ONE POINT WHICH HE STRESSED WAS THAT PANAMA HAD PROPOSED THAT DURATION OF NEW TREATY "IN ALL OF ITS ASPECTS, INCLUDING DEFENSE" NOT EXTEND BEYOND END OF CURRENT CENTURY; THIS DREW FAIRLY WIDESPREAD APPLAUSE FROM MEMBERS.

4. MEMBERS PUT NO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO OZORES OR STAFF. THREE RESOLUTIONS WERE PROPOSED AND APPROVED BY SHOW OF HANDS IN WHICH ASSEMBLY 1) CALLED ON UNCLASSIFIED

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MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (WHICH SERVES GOP IN ROLE SIMILAR TO OMB IN US) TO INCREASE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S BUDGET TO ADEQUATELY SUPPORT ITS WORK; 2) VOICED ITS COMPLETE SOLIDARITY WITH AND SUPPORT OF GOVERNMENT IN TREATY NEGOTIATIONS; AND 3) ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE (IN LONG RESOLUTION) TO AMPHICTYONIC CONFERENCE, AND SUGGESTED THAT IT BE CALLED INTO SPECIAL SESSION AT TIME OF CON-

REFERENCE TO RECEIVE HEADS OF STATE WHO WILL BE PRESENT.
THERE WAS NO SUBSTANTIAL DISSENT FROM ANY OF THESE
RESOLUTIONS.

5. OZORES' STATEMENT AND RESOLUTIONS DREW MODERATELY
PROMINENT PLAY IN ALL MORNING DAILIES FOR OCTOBER 23,
BUT OCCASIONED NO PARTICULAR EDITORIAL COMMENT.
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